

ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



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Water System Records Retention

At times, owning, operating and maintaining a public water system can be a daunting challenge. The paperwork requirements alone can feel overwhelming. Keeping complete, well-organized records can greatly simplify the task of running a public water system. Records prove compliance, track system trends, and assist in the overall planning, operation, maintenance and management of the water system. An owner or operator cannot effectively run a water system and keep it in compliance without keeping and maintaining good records.

This fact sheet is designed to assist owners and operators with managing system records. Records should be kept in a secure place and readily available for use by the system operator or to be provided to a state or federal inspector upon request. If the ownership, management, or the operator of your system changes, all records are required to be transferred to the new responsible party.

The following is a summary of records that water systems should have and how long the records should be maintained. Most of the documents cited are required by state or federal statute. The rest are strongly recommended for efficient water system management and operation.

Documents Perpetually Kept, Maintained, & Updated (keep current version)	
Sampling Schedules	Review & update as necessary (quarterly)
Monitoring Waivers	Approval letter & copy of application
Emergency Plan	Update as necessary; review annually
Operations & Maintenance Manual	Update as necessary
Distribution System Maps (Record Drawings)	Update as necessary
Inspection Logs	
Backwash Recycling Records	
Cross Connection Control Program	Most recent report, frequency of testing, and results
Source Water Protection Plans	Update periodically
Wellhead Protection Plans	Update periodically

Records Kept for 3 Years	
Public Notice Documents	Copy of notice & certification
Consumer Confidence Reports	Copy of CCR & certification
Water Use Data	Direct measurements & calculations
Water Conservation Program	Meter readings, rate structure, outreach
Filter Monitoring	Surface water systems

Records Kept for 5 Years	
Bacteria Analysis	
Cross Connection Control Records	Inspection, test, repair
Level I and Level II Assessment Reports	
Sanitary Defect Correction Documentation	

Records Kept for 10 Years	
Chemical Monitoring Analysis	VOC, SOC, Nitrate, Nitrite, IOC, radiological
Disinfection Residuals	If system disinfects
Water Quality Testing	Chlorine residuals, temperature, pH, etc.
State Sanitary Surveys	
Sanitary Survey Deficiency Correction Documentation	

Records Kept for 12 Years	
Lead & Copper	Sample analysis, corrosion measurements, consumer notification

Permanent Records	
Well Siting Approval Letter	For wells approved after 1993
Pump Test Results	Include all pump information/specifications
Disinfection Profiling/Benchmarks	Surface water systems
Drinking Water Source Assessment Report	
Large Groundwater Withdrawal Permit	
Waste Disposal Documentation	Include any discharge permits

Note: Due to the length and complexity of drinking water rules, this list is not complete. Many of the listed documents are not applicable to very small water systems. If you have any questions or if a record you keep is not listed, please contact NHDES for clarification.

For More Information

Please contact the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau at (603) 271-2513 or dwgbinfo@des.nh.gov or visit our website at www.des.nh.gov.

Note: This fact sheet is accurate as of July 2019. Statutory or regulatory changes or the availability of additional information after this date may render this information inaccurate or incomplete.